

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Wrangell Mountains Center****Federal Tax ID: 92-0117864****Project Title:****Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition**

# Wrangell Mountains Center - LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite & Community Center

**State Funding Requested: \$140,000****House District: 6 / C**

One-Time Need

**Brief Project Description:**

Acquisition and adaptive reuse of properties adjacent to the existing historic Wrangell Mountains Center facility will enable expansion into a much-needed, fully fledged educational campus and community center.

**Funding Plan:**

Total Project Cost:	\$250,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$102,950)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$140,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$7,050

*Funding Details:*

*Since launching our capital campaign in August 2010, we have raised \$102,950 in private funds from community members, neighbors, and supporters.*

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Item is \$140,000 toward a \$250,000 project to expand the Wrangell Mountains Center's historic facility in McCarthy, Alaska into a full-fledged campus and community center that will provide opportunities for education and civic engagement to residents of and visitors to McCarthy, Kennecott, and the Copper River basin. The total project cost includes the sales price of the land and structures, modifications and adaptations to the structures and utilities, and closing costs and other start-up costs. The entirety of our request for funding here will go toward the purchase of the property.

The Wrangell Mountains Center (WMC) is a nonprofit organization that fosters understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture in Alaska through scientific and artistic inquiry in the Wrangell Mountains. In this unincorporated, rural community located on private land in the heart of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, the WMC serves as the de facto community center in McCarthy, and plays an increasingly vital role in visitor experiences as more and more tourism comes to the region. The WMC also provides the essential service of hosting the Emergency Community Medical Cache and assisting with emergency logistics and first response when necessary.

The property currently belongs to Meg Hunt, who has lived as a neighbor and partner of the Wrangell Mountains Center for many years with her recently-deceased partner, Ed LaChapelle. Hunt has offered to sell to the WMC below market value because the most suitable destiny for the land and the structures located there.

Due to its immediate adjacency to our existing facility, this acquisition would allow for an expansion of the WMC's campus which is in keeping with wider community use patterns. Our adaptive reuse of existing structures will have a virtually neutral impact on the biophysical environment compared to buying or leasing property elsewhere in or outside of town and building new. Moreover, by developing adjacent property, allowing for fluid co-use by foot, the WMC can continue with its longstanding tradition of minimal vehicular support, thereby reducing the carbon footprint of our various educational programs and preserving the quieter, dust free environment that makes this neighborhood attractive to locals and visitors alike.

With a proven track record of success and a blossoming membership base, the WMC must expand in order to meet a fast-growing local and statewide demand for increased programming, research support, community meetings, and a lengthier season. The LaChapelle-Hunt Homesite includes:

- large, well-built, winterized cabin with solar power and water systems
- green house with self-actuating ventilators
- sauna, shower, woodshed and laundry facilities
- storage shed with wildcrafting supplies and a multitude of tools
- two-story structure with well-appointed workshop and pantry on the ground level and beautiful upstairs studio and library, with roof-mounted solar panels which provide sustainable power to the property
- two functional wells- one low-flow well for garden water, and one new well meant to service main buildings
- a free-standing 10x10 building with a sky light suitable, with minor adaptation, for accommodation or studio space
- the property is situated across the path from the WMC's existing facility, and encompasses seven lots including undeveloped land near McCarthy Creek, perfect for constructing additional structures for visitor housing.

### Project Timeline:

Our scoping and planning culminated with a capital campaign launch in August, 2010. We hope to close on the purchase in FY2011.

### Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Wrangell Mountains Center

### Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Jeremy Pataky  
 Title: Executive Director  
 Address: PO Box 142972 (or 20 Shushanna Street, MXY 99588)  
 Anchorage, Alaska 99514  
 Phone Number: (907)244-7717  
 Email: jeremy@wrangells.org

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No



## WRANGELL MOUNTAINS CENTER

907-244-7717 • [info@wrangells.org](mailto:info@wrangells.org)

Summer: P.O. Box MXY, McCarthy #20 Glennallen, Alaska 99588

Winter: P.O. Box 142972, Anchorage, Alaska 99514-2972

[www.wrangells.org](http://www.wrangells.org)

*Understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture in  
Alaska through artistic and scientific inquiry in the Wrangell Mountains*

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### THE WRANGELL MOUNTAINS CENTER BOARD

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JEREMY PATAKY

February 11, 2011

Office of Senator Albert Kookesh  
Alaska State Capitol, Rm 11  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kookesh and Others Concerned,

On behalf of the communities of McCarthy and Kennecott, I encourage you to support the Wrangell Mountains Center's request for state funding that will enable the purchase of the LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite. This community center and educational campus will serve both the entire community of McCarthy and Kennecott as well as visitors to the region. It will increase programming capacity at the Wrangell Mountains Center, allowing us to offer a greater number of free and low-cost educational programs to the public, and to host town hall meetings and open sessions between the community and the National Park Service, as well as space to facilitate medical courses such as Wilderness First Response and Wilderness EMT in our area that lacks any medical facility or public school, a complement to our role as hosts of the community medical cache located centrally in McCarthy.

We have outgrown our existing facilities, and the public's demand for our programs, as well as increased need for a space suitable to community needs and functions. This property will only be available for a limited time, and if we are unable to raise the funds, the seller will be forced to sell to the next party in line. The property's adjacency to both the existing Wrangell Mountains Center facility and its location in town make it a perfect and natural fit that will be of widespread benefit and use to a wide constituency.

We have wide support from the community, and have managed to raise a considerable sum of private, mostly-local dollars in a relatively short amount of time from a small population. You will also see evidence of this widespread support in the attached letters.

Please consider supporting this center, which will improve the safety and quality of life for residents of McCarthy, Kennecott, and the Copper Basin, as well as others who visit our region. I look forward to sharing stories of our successes that will be engendered by your time and support.

Thank you,

Jeremy Pataky  
Executive Director





## FRIENDS OF KENNICOTT, INC.

Box 241362, Anchorage, Alaska 99524

February 11, 2011

Office of Senator Albert Kookesh  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 11  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Kookesh:

Friends of Kennicott, Inc. urges legislative support for the acquisition of the LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite by the Wrangell Mountains Center (WMC). The WMC was founded in the tiny but robust town of McCarthy over thirty years ago. With no local government, the WMC now serves several key roles in the community. The original WMC educational purposes have expanded over the years and now include a locally-popular arts and lectures series, youth programs, community emergency medical resources, and training for seasonal employees of local businesses. The WMC has outgrown its original home in the historic Old Hardware Store in McCarthy and now needs additional space for expanded cultural and science-based programs and community events.

Friends of Kennicott, a sister non-profit organization also rooted in the McCarthy-Kennicott area, has long been a proponent of community-based activities and public/private partnerships. For example, Friends of Kennicott received \$500,000 from the State Legislature in the early 1990s to conduct emergency stabilization of historic mine buildings, a key factor leading to creation of the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark. In cooperation with the National Park Service, we subsequently raised additional private funds to help restore and operate the Kennecott Recreation Hall for community purposes. In 2009 we turned our management function over to the WMC to take advantage of their small paid staff and excellent record of community involvement. Like the emergency stabilization and Recreation Hall projects, we believe a modest state appropriation toward purchase of the LaChapelle-Hunt property will once again leverage substantial and long-term community and economic benefits.

Additional funding from the State Legislature would greatly assist in the purchase of the LaChapelle-Hunt property, uniquely suited to WMC program expansion given its proximity and collection of environmentally-sustainable buildings and garden space. The WMC has already raised over \$100,000 from locally-connected individuals toward its goal of \$250,000 – an amazing accomplishment considering the size the organization and the community. Friends of Kennicott, Inc. enthusiastically urges the Legislature to join in this effort!

Sincerely,

Ben Shaine  
President, Board of Directors



# McCarthy Area Council

McCarthy Area Council, PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK 99588

Office of Senator Albert Kookesh  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 11  
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Kookesh,

I as president and the members of the Board of the McCarthy Area Council are writing this letter in full support of the Wrangell Mountains Center's effort to raise funds to acquire "Porphyry Place: The Lachapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite" in McCarthy, Alaska. Honoring the elders of our community by establishing this addition to the Wrangell Mountains Center's home base at the "Old Hardware Store" will provide the Center with the space it needs to meet the demand for increased programming and services to both residents and visitors.

The Wrangell Mountains Center's goal of fostering understanding, appreciation and stewardship of wild lands and mountain culture through its programs in the sciences and arts has grown to provide educational seminars and cultural activities which include summer-long arts and lecture series, Arts for Youth (of all ages) workshops, nature walks, and a number of annual events including storytelling. The WMC also host one of the Community Medical Caches, an emergency medical resource located in downtown McCarthy and funded by the McCarthy Area Council with pass-thru State funding which allows for critical first response and evacuation scenarios. The addition of "Porphyry Place" will allow for the continued growth in programming that will put education in the Arts and Sciences at the forefront, improving our community's quality of life and helping to sustain our mountain culture as we meet the demands of growing visitation to the Wrangell - St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

The cultural activities sponsored by the Wrangell Mountains Center in cooperation with the National Park Service, businesses, and other area educational organizations provides a venue for the study and interpretation of the surrounding dynamic environment and landscape by visiting scientist and artists, with benefits to all of those participating communities.

The ability of this small non-profit organization to raise over \$100,000 in private funding from local residents, Wrangell Mountains Center members, and visitors indeed demonstrates the widespread support from the community and for this project. We request that your good offices do everything possible to help the Wrangell Mountains Center to raise the remaining funds, bring this well-received project to fruition, and help to establish this much-needed community facility.

Sincerely,



Mark Vail, President  
McCarthy Area Council



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve  
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439  
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439  
907 822 5234 Fax 907 822 7216

K 18 (WRST-AD)

February 8, 2011

Office of Senator Albert Kookesh  
Alaska State Capitol, Rm 11  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kookesh:

This letter is sent in full support of the Wrangell Mountains Center's capital acquisition project, Porphyry Place: The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite in McCarthy, Alaska. This new community facility, together with the existing Wrangell Mountains Center headquarters at the historic Old Hardware Store, will constitute an excellent campus and community center in McCarthy to serve the needs of local residents, students, and visitors.

As small rural communities, the towns of McCarthy and Kennecott have no formal government, medical facilities, or schools, and the WMC has arisen as the 'de facto' community center for the region, providing cultural activities including free evening lectures, youth arts programs, nature walks, visitor services, and educational programs and events valued by the community. Park visitors frequently participate in these activities. Furthermore, the WMC hosts the Community Medical Cache, an emergency medical resource funded by the McCarthy Area Council, which plays a critical role in emergency first response and evacuation.

Recent research has demonstrated the importance of history and arts in sustainable economic development, and acquiring this new facility would bolster the WMC's existing role in attracting cultural tourism to the region. Moreover, by also providing cultural and science education programming, the WMC sustains the quality of life for local small business owners, their summer employees, children, and other residents.

The fact that this small nonprofit organization has managed to raise over \$100,000 in a relatively short period of time, all in private funds, demonstrates a deep degree of community support and buy-in; I hope you will be able to assist Wrangell Mountain Center's efforts to raise the remaining funds and thus establish this important community facility.

Sincerely,  
[signed hard copy was mailed]  
Meg Jensen  
Superintendent

**Organization Name:**

**Wrangell Mountains Center**

**Project Name:**

**The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite and Community Center**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>Requested from Legislature</b>	<b>Other Funds*</b>	<b>Total Project Budget</b>
Capital Acquisition	140,000	35,000	175,000
Personnel (wages, taxes, benefits)	-	24,000	24,000
Legal fees	-	5,000	5,000
Equipment & Retrofitting	-	20,000	20,000
Insurance	-	3,000	3,000
Supplies	-	2,000	2,000
Printing and copying	-	4,000	4,000
Telephone/internet	-	3,000	3,000
Postage and freight	-	2,000	2,000
Communications/Marketing	-	12,000	12,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>

<b>* Source of other funds</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Private Donors	in-hand or pledged	102,950
Private Donors	cultivation	7,050
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>110,000</b>

www.wrangells.org

PO Box 142972, Anchorage AK, 99514-2972

PO Box MXY 20, Glennallen AK, 99588

(907) 244-7717



# Wrangell Mountains Center 2010 Capital Campaign

## Porphyry Place: The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite Acquisition

I pledge to give the following amount by February 28, 2010:

- Sustaining Circle: \$20,000 and up
- Benefactors: \$10,000 - \$19,999
- Patrons: \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Supporters: \$1,000 - \$4,999
- Friends: \$500 - \$999
- Contributors: \$1 - \$499

Name:  
Address:  
Phone:  
Email:



Checks payable to  
Wrangell Mountains Center  
may be sent to:

PO Box 142972  
Anchorage AK, 99514-2972

Secure online payments can be  
made via our website:  
[www.wrangells.org](http://www.wrangells.org)

Thank You!

### The Importance of Private Donations

Sustaining the Wrangell Mountains Center’s mission while preserving the legacy of Ed LaChapelle and Meg Hunt will require the active participation and investment of our alumni and friends, local neighbors and businesses, committed scientists and artists, and all who share Ed and Meg’s vision and generosity towards the sustainable, inspired future of the McCarthy community.

The opportunity for acquiring funds for the LaChapelle-Hunt homesite presents a time-sensitive challenge. Meg Hunt has offered the WMC the homesite at a reduced market value, contingent, however, to the sale closing by April 15, 2011. Therefore, the WMC is seeking private donations as soon as possible.

Our immediate goal is to raise \$250,000 in private donations to cover the purchase price and some start-up costs for adaptations to the existing structures. We hope to receive the full amount in private pledges committed before February 28, 2010. The WMC will pursue matching grants to compliment your private donations.

If we do not raise enough money to buy the property, donations will directly support the Wrangell Mountains Center’s mission of fostering understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture in Alaska through scientific and artistic inquiry in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.

We seek support in the following categories:

- Sustaining Circle: \$20,000 and up
- Benefactors: \$10,000 - \$19,999
- Patrons: \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Supporters: \$1,000 - \$4,999
- Friends: \$500 - \$999
- Contributors: \$1 - \$499

All donations are fully tax-deductible and will be acknowledged onsite through a creative display.

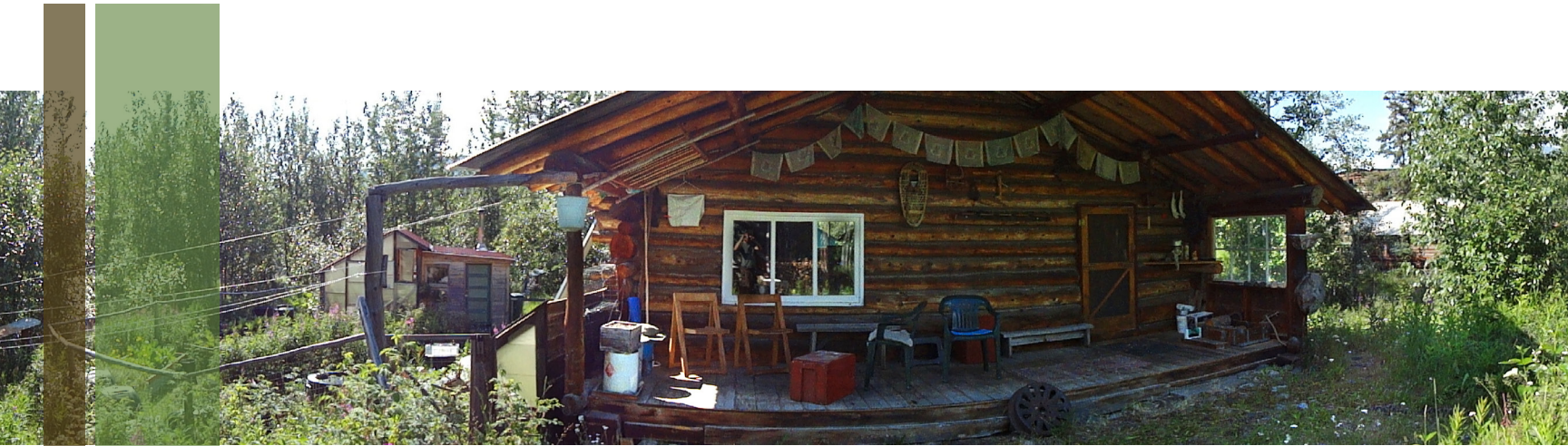
Please pledge your support for Porphyry Place today!



Ed LaChapelle and Meg Hunt. Photo by JT Thomas

### Our Mission

*Wrangell Mountains Center is a private nonprofit institute that fosters understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of wildlands and mountain culture through scientific and artistic inquiry in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve.*



## Wrangell Mountains Center McCarthy Campus Expansion

### Porphyry Place: The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite





Photo by Sarah Davies

## Wrangell Mountains Center: Positive Growth

Based in McCarthy, Alaska, the Wrangell Mountains Center (WMC) is the oldest and most active organization serving the communities in and around Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve. As the only private education and research-oriented institution in the Park, the WMC serves students of all ages, local and visiting artists, scientific researchers, visitors, and local citizens.

The relationships between people and landscape, individuals and government, science and the arts flourish here in surprising and meaningful ways. Since our inception, the WMC has grown into a vibrant organization actively accomplishing our mission through a variety of programs, activities, and partnerships.

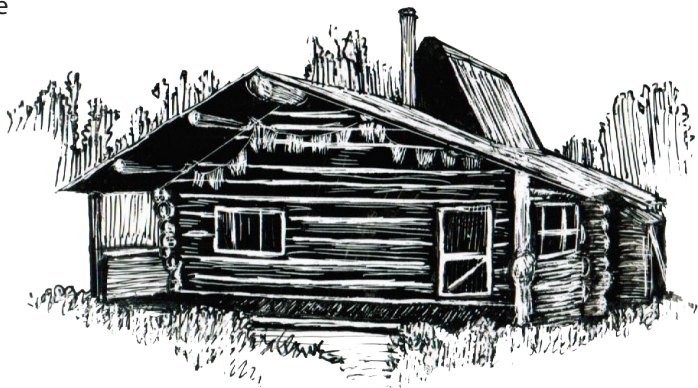
### Our Situation

For thirty years, the WMC has been headquartered in a century-old building called the Old Hardware Store. We have grown large and active enough to feel real limitations imposed by our current facilities and utilities, and have been strategizing how to continue achieving our mission while pursuing goals outlined in our long-term planning documents. Our activities have increased significantly in the last few years, as have our demands for space. We face increased programming space needs for lectures, classes, and community events; increased accommodation demands from visiting faculty, guest instructors, research scientists, and staff; a heightened demand for visiting artist and writer studio space; the need for more garden space and a greenhouse; and a need for a facility suited to off-season programming.

## The Proposed Solution: *Porphyry Place: The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite*

The Wrangell Mountains Center has a unique and time-sensitive opportunity to make a much-needed expansion of our facilities by acquiring a neighboring property that was for many years the residence of Ed LaChapelle and Meg Hunt. Acquisition of the LaChapelle-Hunt homesite would offer the WMC many advantages to further our own mission while celebrating and interpreting the accomplishments of some of McCarthy’s most exemplary longstanding residents.

The WMC’s tentative name for the new facility is Porphyry Place: The LaChapelle-Hunt Educational Homesite. The name honors the fabulous mountain views from the main cabin and studio while remembering Ed and Meg’s own venture, Porphyry Productions, which hosted free performing arts events and workshops in the valley for many years. We hope you will join us in making Porphyry Place a reality which will honor Ed and Meg’s dedication to education, science, arts, and sustainable systems in their beloved mountain community.



Drawing by Kristin Link

### The Homesite

Purchasing the LaChapelle-Hunt homesite, which is adjacent to our current facility, is the most feasible, appropriate, and practical option available to us. Expanding our McCarthy Campus onto the homesite will enable us to offer a much more robust menu of mission-specific programming to a broader constituency.

The owner has given us the opportunity to purchase the homesite by April 15, 2011. The property itself, plus closing costs, modifications, and peripherals, will require \$250,000.

The homesite features the following:

- 24’ x 28’, well-built, winterized cabin with exquisitely engineered solar power and water systems, two wood stoves, large covered porch, root cellar, and kitchen, complete with an operations manual written by Ed and Meg
- 9’ x 16’ greenhouse with self-actuating ventilators and shower
- Gardens with raised beds and good soil
- Composting tumblers
- 8’ x 16’ sauna, shower, and laundry facilities (Staber washing machine and a 275 gallon water tank)
- Two woodsheds, one fuel shed, and a tool shed
- 16’ x 20’ two-story structure with well-appointed workshop and pantry on the ground level, with wood stove, and beautiful upstairs studio and library, with roof-mounted solar panels which provide sustainable power to the property
- Two functional wells – one low-flow well for garden water, and one new well meant to service the main buildings
- A free-standing 10’ x 10’ studio with a skylight and small wood burning stove
- Seven lots, including a bit of undeveloped land near McCarthy Creek

Two neighboring properties are owned by friends of the Wrangell Mountains Center, including one board member.

### Our Vision

The WMC hopes to honor Ed and Meg by utilizing their main cabin and upstairs studio/library as multipurpose classrooms, lecture halls, and community spaces for educational programs in the arts and sciences. We envision their entire property, in conjunction with the Hardware Store, serving as a demonstration site for sustainable, off-grid systems. Resident artists and writers could live and work on-site. Staff and special guests could utilize the shower and sauna. The garden and greenhouse would feed visitors, students, and staff. The kitchen in the cabin, situated as it is in a space large enough to accommodate an audience, could permit stove-based wildcrafting workshops (home canning, traditional cooking, bread making, fermentation, etc.). Other outbuildings could allow for increased storage space. The open space may allow for on-site housing. Our existing Hardware Store facility, joined with the adjacent Porphyry Place, will constitute a complete, vibrant campus in McCarthy.



Top left: Upstairs studio  
Top right: View of garden and greenhouse from dining table  
Bottom: Inside main cabin



Jeremy Pataky



WRANGELL MOUNTAINS CENTER



MCCARTHY, ALASKA

